

Committee on Rules and Administration
Statement by Ms. Christy McCormick
Nominee for Commissioner, Election Assistance Commission
Wednesday September 10, 2014

Good morning Chairman Schumer, Ranking Member Roberts and members of the committee. I am pleased to be here to discuss my nomination to serve on the United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC). Thank you Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell for submitting my name to the President, and to President Obama for nominating me. I am deeply honored that you are considering me for a position of trust in our government.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify on my background and qualifications to become an EAC commissioner. My interest in elections started as a young adult when my parents involved our family in working on campaigns and hosting fundraisers for candidates at our family home in Massachusetts. I was excited to be able to cast my first vote at age eighteen in New York, and found myself running for a statewide office in Michigan by the age of 20. I volunteered to be an assistant voter registrar in Connecticut in the 1980s, and also in Virginia, when I moved there in the early 1990s. Having been involved in elections and voting in several states early on in my life gives me a unique perspective.

In 2006, I joined the U.S. Department of Justice Voting Section, where I continue to serve as a Trial Attorney. My work at the Justice Department involves investigating and prosecuting violations of federal voting statutes, including the Voting Rights Act, the National Voter Registration Act, the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) and the MOVE Act, most of which have some nexus with the work of the EAC. I have been privileged throughout my career at the Justice Department and at the Office of the Virginia Attorney General to contribute to some very important cases and to have had an impact on First Amendment, civil rights and voting jurisprudence. In addition to litigation, I also conduct election monitoring for the Justice Department and have observed numerous elections in polling places all across America.

In 2009, the Office of the Deputy Attorney General sent me on a year-long detail to Iraq, where I served as an Attorney Advisor and Acting Deputy Rule of Law Coordinator. The Office of the Rule of Law Coordinator was embedded in Embassy Baghdad and was responsible for collaborating with the Department of State, the U.S. Military and other Federal agencies, along with our international partners on rule of law initiatives. We provided advice and support to Iraqi ministries and legal institutions including the Higher Judicial Council, the General Secretariat for the Council of Ministers, the Ministries of Justice, Interior, Human Rights, and Women's Affairs, among others. I also served as a liaison to parallel ministries in the Kurdish Region. One of my main, and most exciting, assignments was to serve as the Justice Department's expert on elections in Iraq. Along with our State Department colleagues, I worked with the Iraqis on their 2010 National Elections. This included providing assistance and advice to the Independent High Electoral Commission during the run up to the elections, participating in a team observing the elections in Wasit Province, and witnessing the extensive 12-day election re-count. I was deeply impressed to see a large number of women voting on Election Day and very encouraged by watching families bring in their children to teach them about democracy and to dip their fingers in the

electoral ink. It is my deepest hope that the idea of democracy and fair elections will still be possible in Iraq in the future.

As for elections here in the United States, if confirmed, I will do my best at the EAC to assist our 8,000 jurisdictions in fairly and smoothly administering their elections. We have much work to do to assure that all eligible voters are able to cast their votes in elections that are secure and in which the electorate can place its full confidence. While the EAC is not tasked with rulemaking or running elections, it is in a position to provide information, share best practices, collect data for election analysis, and offer programs that support modern elections such that the public has full access to the ballot box and trust in our electoral outcomes. I believe this is essential to the health of our republic and I would like to continue this important work at the EAC.

As with all of us, I did not come to this place without the help of many others. I want to thank the many people I have worked with and for, including Justice Elizabeth McClanahan, Professor Michael I. Krauss, Commissioner Judith Williams Jagdmann, former Virginia Solicitor William Hurd, many of my current and former colleagues in the United States Department of Justice and in the Virginia Office of the Attorney General, who have provided me with amazing opportunities and helped me hone my legal abilities. Thank you also to the election officials I have met and worked with across the country over the past eight years, who work long hours, deal with often complex logistics, and do so many things that go unnoticed in running our elections. Thank you to my dear friends, with whom I am able to debate and discuss the issues of our day and who provide me with love, support me with prayer, and encourage me with many laughs. Thank you to my family, especially my parents, Keith and Carol Cutbill, who introduced me to campaigns and elections, my sisters Catherine, Laura, and Lynda, my brother Chaz and his wife Corie, my nephew Parker and niece Bentley. Special thanks to my sister Cecily Cutbill, who is here with me today, and to her husband Christopher Thorne, my niece Caroline, and nephew William, who have sacrificially housed me and fed me. Finally, my deepest love and appreciation go to my beautiful daughter Elizabeth Mead, who is here today from California – thank you for your love and for inspiring me daily.

Members of the committee, if confirmed, I am prepared do my best to serve our country as an EAC commissioner and in that role to commit to appear and testify before Congress upon its request. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Christy Ann Cutbill McCormick

Christy McCormick is currently a Senior Trial Attorney at the United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Voting Section and has served in that position since 2006. She was detailed by the Deputy Attorney General to be Senior Attorney Advisor and Acting Deputy Rule of Law Coordinator in the Office of the Rule of Law Coordinator in Iraq from 2009 to 2010, where she worked on the Iraq national elections and on rule of law matters. From 2003 to 2006, she served as a Judicial Clerk to the Honorable Elizabeth A. McClanahan in the Court of Appeals of Virginia. Ms. McCormick was an Assistant Attorney General and Assistant to the Solicitor General in the Office of the Attorney General of Virginia from 2001 to 2003. She was a Judicial Law Clerk in the Seventh Judicial Circuit Court from 1999 to 2001. Ms. McCormick received her B.A. from the University of Buffalo and a J.D. with honors from the George Mason University School of Law, and the William & Mary School of Law.